

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended) A torsion bar that can be installed in a seat belt retractor as an energy absorber, comprising:

a torsion bar;

a gear integral therewith; and a flange integral with the torsion bar is located at an end of the torsion bar with a circumferential groove having generally radially inclined side boundary surfaces in the bar being adjacent to and disposed between the flange and the gear, wherein the circumferential groove extends into the torsion bar more deeply in a radial direction than the trough or otherwise lowest surface between the gear teeth of the adjacent gear, the circumferential groove having [[a]] one side boundary surface on the flange and [[a]] the opposite side boundary surface adjacent to and radially deeper than the trough or otherwise lowest surface between the gear teeth of said gear.

2. (cancelled)

3. (cancelled)

4. (cancelled)

5. (cancelled)

6. (previously amended) The torsion bar according to claim 4, wherein the gear adjacent to the circumferential groove is molded on to the torsion bar by a rolling process.

7. (previously amended) The torsion bar according to claim 6, wherein the circumferential groove is molded into the torsion bar by a rolling process.

8. (cancelled)

9. (cancelled)

10. (cancelled)

11. (cancelled)

12. (original) The torsion bar according to claim 1, further comprising a second gear integral with the torsion bar located at another end of the torsion bar.

13. (cancelled)

14. (cancelled)

15. (original) The torsion bar according to claim 6, further comprising a second gear integral with the torsion bar located at another end of the torsion bar.

16. (original) The torsion bar according to claim 7, further comprising a second gear integral with the torsion bar located at another end of the torsion bar.

17. (previously amended) The torsion bar according to claim 12, wherein the second gear is molded onto the torsion bar by submitting the torsion bar to a rolling process.